

COUNTY OF YORK



COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
Daniel M. Stuck

VIRGINIA

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November 2, 1998

Mr. Quintin D. Elliott
Resident Engineer
Virginia Department of Transportation
P. O. Box HD
Williamsburg, VA 23187

Dear Mr. Elliott:

Recent discussions among members of County staff and with the Board of Supervisors have raised some questions regarding the need to widen Route 17 to six lanes between Route 105 and the Coleman Bridge at the present time. While there is no doubt that the widening will be necessary if six lane traffic movements are permitted on the Coleman Bridge, until that occurs it appears to me that there may be more pressing road widening needs along other segments of the Route 17 corridor.

Therefore, with the Board of Supervisors' concurrence, I am writing to request that the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) consider modifying the current Route 105 and Route 17 widening project to incorporate the following changes:

1. Postpone the widening of Route 17 to six lanes from Route 105 to the project's terminus near the Coleman Bridge and replace the lane widening with the addition of paved shoulders primarily along the south bound lanes. In addition, perform any necessary intersection improvements along the corridor including the signalized intersections of Route 704 (Cook Road) and Route 238 (Goosley Road).
2. Proceed with the four lane widening of Route 105 (Fort Eustis Boulevard).
3. Transfer any potential cost savings for modifying the project to other segments of Route 17, south of Route 105, that are critical for overall improvement along the corridor. This would include, but not be limited to, improvements determined to be necessary by the signal timing corridor study recently initiated by VDOT, which is supported by the County's request for CMAQ implementation funds, and the previous corridor improvement studies (1986 and 1994).

Mr. Quintin D. Elliott
November 2, 1998
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It is our opinion that the modifications I have described will result in the best utilization of funds for corridor improvements by targeting those segments of the corridor most in need of improvement. Furthermore, the Route 17 corridor north of Route 105 has limited overall development potential, primarily because most of the adjoining land is owned by the Department of the Interior. As a result, land development along this portion of the corridor will be only a minor factor in both traffic generation and the creation of conflict points that might result from the installation of driveway access points to Route 17.

It would be greatly appreciated if VDOT would give serious consideration to the modifications described above and continue in our joint effort to improve traffic conditions and flow along the entire Route 17 corridor in the County.

If you have any questions regarding this request or need additional information from the County in performing your review, please contact our Chief Planner, Bob Baldwin, at 890-3495. Thank you for your assistance in this most important matter. I will look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



Daniel M. Stuck
County Administrator

Copy to: York County Board of Supervisors
J. Mark Carter, Assistant to the County Administrator
Robert A. Baldwin, AICP, Chief Planner



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

P.O. BOX 40

WILLIAMSBURG, 23187-3808

December 22, 1998

DAVID R. GEHR
COMMISSIONER

QUINTIN D. ELLIOTT
RESIDENT ENGINEER

Route: 105
Project: 0105-965-F02, PE102, C502
Location: York County

Route: 17
Project: 6017-099-F19, PE101, C501
Location: York County

Mr. Daniel M. Stuck
York County Administrator
P. O. Box 532
Yorktown, VA 23690

Ref: Modifications to Projects

Dear Mr. Stuck:

This is in response to your letter dated November 2, 1998, requesting the Department to postpone the widening of Route 17 from Route 105 to the Coleman Bridge.

The Department is in the process of analyzing the flow of traffic on Route 17 with the York River Crossing Demand Study, which will assume Route 17 being six-laned and Route 105 being four-laned. If these improvements are in place, there may not be a need for the up river crossing.

Based on the impacts these improvements can have on the region as a whole, it is the Department's position to continue with the project as scheduled. One of the options that the Department considers in the planning stage is the no-build option, which analyzes not building the entire project or portions of the project. Should during the design stage of the project or the York River Crossing Study, it is determined that traffic can be handled with just four lanes on Route 17, we would proceed with just four-laning Route 105.

There will be other opportunities for the public to provide their input during the public hearing process. However, should you wish to discuss this further prior to that time, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Quintin D. Elliott".

Quintin D. Elliott
Resident Engineer

COUNTY OF YORK

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
Daniel M. Stuck



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Melanie L. Rapp
District 5

September 8, 2000

The Honorable Thomas K. Norment, Jr.
Senator
P.O. Box 1697
Williamsburg, VA 23187

Dear ~~Senator~~ ^{Timmy} Norment:

I am writing to you regarding a matter of extreme importance to the transportation network in York County. As you may know, the Virginia Department of Transportation is pursuing a project that will widen Route 17 between Fort Eustis Boulevard and the Coleman Bridge from four to six lanes. To date, about \$33 million has been allocated to the \$37 million project by the Commonwealth Transportation Board.

This project, as it is now being planned, was never supported by York County. As you know, for many years the County supported the construction of an upriver crossing alternative to the Coleman Bridge. When it became apparent that the Coleman Bridge would be widened instead, the County shifted its emphasis to the development of convenient approaches to the bridge. Hence, the County has supported for many years the widening of Fort Eustis Boulevard (Route 105) west of Route 17 and, in concept, a "diversion" project to carry traffic more directly between Route 105 and Route 17 north of York High School. The theory behind this was that it would be a sufficiently direct route to the Coleman Bridge that it could encourage commuters to use Route 105 and I-64 and avoid the very congested sections of Route 17 in the Grafton and Tabb area of the County.

In 1998, after it became apparent that VDOT would not consider pursuing a new linkage between Routes 105 and Route 17 (the "diversion" route), I sent a letter (copy attached) to Mr. Quintin Elliott, Resident Engineer, expressing the County's desire that the widening between Route 105 and the Coleman Bridge be deferred in favor of more modest capacity/safety enhancements such as turn lane installations or extensions, shoulder widening, etc. Furthermore, the letter suggests that the funds saved by doing so be used for improvements (such as widening to six lanes) to Route 17 in the Grafton and Tabb areas. The need for improvements on the southern segments of Route 17 is well documented in corridor studies that were performed in 1986 and 1994. In 1986, the estimated cost of the recommended enhancements was approximately \$30 million and the County has consistently (but to no avail) requested these improve-

The Honorable Thomas K. Norment, Jr.

September 8, 2000

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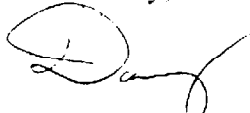
ments in its presentations to the Commonwealth Transportation Board during the annual pre-allocation hearings.

It is the County's position that implementing improvements to the lower Route 17 corridor would be the best use of the Commonwealth's limited transportation funds. As you know, the segment north of Route 105 has limited development potential because of the extensive land-holdings of the National Park Service. Even if it is widened, traffic will continue to be constrained by the four-lane Coleman Bridge. The bottom line, at least from the County's vantage point, is that the road functions very well and has adequate capacity as it is. We cannot say the same about lower Route 17.

Despite what we consider to be very logical recommendations, VDOT seems determined to proceed "full-speed ahead" with the widening project north of Route 105. Design drawings are being prepared, and there seems to be nothing the County can do to have the alternatives and options considered. That is why I am writing to you. I know you are committed to the wise and efficient use of the Commonwealth's transportation improvement funds. I know you are familiar with the capacity and safety problems on lower Route 17. Thirty-three million dollars would go a long way to alleviating those problems and ensuring the economic vitality of York County's main commercial corridor. I hope you will agree that this is something that needs to be re-considered and that you will assist us in having VDOT and the Commonwealth Transportation Board do so.

As always, any assistance that you can provide will be greatly appreciated. If you have questions or need additional information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Daniel M. Stuck
County Administrator

jmc

Copy to: York County Board of Supervisors
James C. Cleveland, Hampton Roads District Administrator
Quintin D. Elliott, Resident Engineer
J. Mark Carter, Assistant to the County Administrator
Robert A. Baldwin, AICP, Chief Planner